CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for removing personal information from a first electronic document produced by a document-generating application, wherein the method comprises the steps of:

activating a privacy option provided by the application, wherein activation of the privacy option enables removal of one or more pieces of personal information from the first document.

2.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising saving the first document.

3.   The method of Claim 1, wherein the one or more pieces of personal information comprises an author's name, a user's name, a company name, a manager's name, a last saved by name, an e-mail address, or a combination thereof.

4.   The method of Claim 1, wherein the removal of one or more pieces of personal information from the first document comprises replacing the one or more pieces of personal information with generic information.

5.   The method of Claim 4, wherein the generic information comprises a string of letters, numbers, symbols, spaces, or a combination thereof.

6.   The method of Claim 1, wherein activation of the privacy option removes one or more pieces of personal information from the first document.

7.   The method of Claim 2, wherein saving the first document removes one or more pieces of personal information from the first document when the first document is saved.

8.   A method for removing personal information from a second electronic document, wherein the method comprises creating a template of the second document from the first document produced by the method of Claim 1.

9.   A computing system containing at least one application module usable on the computing system, wherein the at least one application module comprises application code for performing the method of Claim 1.

10.   A computer readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions for performing the method of Claim 1.

11.   A method for removing personal information from an electronic document, wherein the method comprises the steps of:

receiving input of one or more pieces of personal information into one or more data storage fields in response to a request for personal information from a document-generating application; and

receiving input to activate a privacy option for the document;

wherein activation of the privacy option enables removal of the one or more pieces of personal information from the document.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein the one or more pieces of personal information comprises an author's name, a user's name, a company name, a manager's name, a last saved by name, an e-mail address, or a combination thereof.

13. The method of Claim 11, wherein the removal of one or more pieces of personal information from the document comprises replacing the one or more pieces of personal information with generic information.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein the generic information comprises a string of letters, numbers, symbols, spaces, or a combination thereof.

15. The method of Claim 11, further comprising receiving input to save the document, wherein saving the document removes the one or more pieces of personal information from the document or replacing the one or more pieces of personal information with generic information.

16. The method of Claim 11, further comprising receiving input to enter one or more pieces of new personal information into the document after activation of the privacy option, wherein the one or more pieces of new personal information into the document are (a) removed from the document or (b) replaced with generic information (1) as soon as the one or more pieces of new personal information are added to the document, or (2) as soon as an "OK" prompt is replied to by an user, or (3) as soon as the document is closed.

17. A computing system containing at least one application module usable on the computing system, wherein the at least one application module comprises application code for performing the method of Claim 11.

18.   A computer readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions for performing the method of Claim 11.

19.   A computer readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions for performing a method for removing personal information from an electronic document, wherein the method comprises the steps of:

activating a privacy option provided by the instructions, wherein activation of the privacy option enables removal of one or more pieces of personal information from the document.

20.   The computer readable medium of Claim 19, wherein the method further comprises saving the document.

21.   A method for removing personal information from an electronic document created by a document-generating application, wherein the method comprises the steps of:

providing a privacy option; and

receiving input to activate the privacy option;

wherein activation of the privacy option enables removal of one or more pieces of personal information from the document or replacement of one or more pieces of personal information with generic information.

22.   The method of Claim 21, further comprising receiving input to save the document if the application has a save function.

23.   The method of Claim 21, further comprising:

providing a prompt to input instructions to activate the privacy option upon closing or saving the document.

5   24. The method of Claim 21, wherein the personal information comprises at least one piece of personal information selected from an author's name, a user's name, a company name, a manager's name, a last saved by name, and an e-mail address.

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     25. A computing system containing at least one application module usable on the computing system, wherein the at least one application module comprises application code for performing the method of Claim 21.

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     26. A computer readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions for performing the method of Claim 21.

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